

Sinclair Broadcasting has claimed that "Stolen Honor" is news. News, especially broadcast news, has a responsibility to viewers--and to the public that provides it with free use of the electromagnetic spectrum--to provide multiple perspectives. Sinclair's plan to air "Stolen Honor" this week without a program showing an opposite perspective is a clear violation of that trust. And a plan to make this kind of broadcast in the near future is just as real and just as suspicious as a past broadcast.

But even more importantly, Sinclair is being allowed to judge itself. It claims that "Stolen Honor" is news, but the company itself saying so does not make it so. It can only be news if the media and the public agree with that assessment, and to date virtually no media commentator or private citizen has agreed with that assessment. The FCC must not be passive and uncritical in accepting Sinclair's claims, especially when the stakes--a properly informed voting public--are so high.